



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Division of Educational Programs and Assessment Office of Early Literacy

Reading Coach Job Description and Expectations

DEFINITION:

A reading coach is an individual who has a very strong background in both the theory and the practice of literacy education (reading and writing) of young children (grades K-3). In addition a reading coach demonstrates the ability to share that knowledge and experience with their colleagues in an effective way.

QUALIFICATIONS:

The minimum qualifications for a reading coach are that an individual needs to have a college degree and to have had significant successful experience in teaching children in grades K-3 to read and write (literacy). In addition, the qualities that are most evident in those individuals who are likely to be successful as reading coaches are:

- Comprehensive knowledge, gained by formal or informal learning, about the content and methodology of balanced reading instruction as it is expressed in one or more of the key areas identified by the National Reading Panel:
 - Phonics
 - Phonemic Awareness
 - Vocabulary
 - Fluency
 - Comprehension
- Experience in assessing student skills and knowledge in reading and writing, using a variety of formal and informal assessment tools
- Experience in using assessment results to shape instruction
- Knowledge of successful techniques in classroom management and instructional planning for effective literacy instruction
- Knowledge of theory and practice of teaching writing as process and product, especially as it relates to early elementary age children
- In-depth knowledge of significant topics related to early literacy, such as children's literature and contemporary research in reading instruction

- Experience and personal characteristics that predict success in working with professionals who have various levels of responsibility for literacy education
- Experience and personal characteristics that predict success in coaching other professionals with varying levels of experience and knowledge
- Experience and personal characteristics that predict success in acting as a resource for literacy educators

REPORTS TO:

Director, Office of Early Literacy or designee (Coordinator, Office of Early Literacy)

WORK ASSIGNMENTS:

Reading coaches will be assigned to schools/school districts at the discretion of the Director of the Office of Early Literacy in consultation with Coordinators, coaches and school personnel.

DUTIES AND ACTIVITIES:

- Make on-going classroom visitations as appropriate and necessary to be able to perform the duties of reading coach.
- Provide content knowledge and resources about learning and teaching literacy – including:
 - teaching strategies,
 - assessment techniques,
 - assessment of reading skills,
 - interpretation of assessment results,
 - classroom routines, and
 - practices that promote literacy, etc.
- Act as a link between school personnel and other literacy professionals/resources.
- Provide information and guidance regarding a range of effective and innovative literacy practices that make up balanced literacy through various avenues such as:
 - Individual discussions (informal or formal),
 - Coaching sessions,
 - Demonstration lessons with pre- and post- discussion/analysis,
 - Study groups,
 - Staff meetings,
 - Professional Development and/or in-service training programs, and
 - Workshops.
- Assist building and classroom level educators in implementing challenging and rigorous curriculum based on the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards.
- Use student work and assessment results as rationales and evidence to:
 - Determine effectiveness of the Reading Coach program,
 - Assist teachers in making decision about instructional activities.
- Maintain paperwork consistently and in an appropriate manner.
- Develop a schedule that is appropriate and equitable to client schools and teachers within the schools so that the objectives of the Early Literacy program will be achieved.
- Participate in professional development activities to build capacity as a resource for client schools and to model professional behavior.
- Prepare materials for the use of the department and client schools and teachers.

- Work in partnership to improve school-wide literacy.
- Adhere to the policies and regulations of the New Jersey State Department of Education as set forth through the Bureau of Human Resources and the Director of the Office of Early Literacy.
- Maintain the confidentiality of schools, teachers, and classrooms.
- Exemplify collegial behavior and a “Together we can do it.” attitude.
- Present a pleasant and professional demeanor at all times.
- Hold high expectations for teachers (and other professionals) as well as their students.
- Model the characteristics of a reflective professional who monitors and evaluates one’s own professional activities with the goal of continual growth and development.
- Ask for help and resources when needed.
- Be prepared and on time.
- Keep abreast of current research-based literacy practices.
- Obtain prior approval from the Office of Early Literacy before distributing written communication or other media.

EVALUATION:

The work of a reading coach will be evaluated by the Director of the Office of Early Literacy and/or his/her designee(s) in accordance with the policies and provisions of the New Jersey Department of Education. Substantive information from the reading coach, departmental coordinators, and from appropriate personnel in client schools will be considered as part of the evaluation process.